

City Bridges

Fall 2009

News to keep you connected to Albany City government

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This issue of *City Bridges* features the Albany Community Development and Finance Departments

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Albany Dog Regulations Revised: Licenses Required, Limits Eased

After months of debate and review, the Albany City Council on July 8, 2009, adopted changes to the Albany Municipal Code regulations on dogs. The new laws took effect on August 7, 2009:

- Adult dogs in Albany must be licensed as required by state law (ORS 609.100). Licenses are issued by the county where you live, and you will need to provide proof that your dog has a valid rabies certificate. License fees vary slightly in Linn and Benton Counties. The City of Albany does not issue a separate City license.

- A dog must wear the license tag on a collar or harness when outside and not contained in a fenced yard or enclosed pen or on a chain.

- The City's leash law remains in effect as it has for decades.

- The Albany Municipal Code limits the number of adult dogs to two per property



within the city limits. The new ordinance allows for an exemption for up to two more if neither the owner nor any one over age 11 who lives with them has ever been convicted of an animal law violation. (Kids under age 11 aren't detained for or charged with breaking laws.)

- To get an exemption, you will need to go to the Police Department, 1117 Jackson Street SE, pay \$50, and fill out an application form. The \$50 fee is per exemption, not per additional dog, and is good for three years.

- The police will check your record and that of everyone over age 11 who lives with you for animal law convictions. If everyone's record is clean, you can have up to four adult licensed dogs per property.

- When the three-year period ends, you'll be asked if you want the exemption to continue. If yes, you'll fill out a new application, pay the \$50 processing fee, and have your record(s) checked again.

The code language in its entirety is on the City's Web site, www.cityofalbany.net/municipalcode. It's AMC 6.04.010-015. Albany police can also explain the code. Contact the Community Resource Unit at 541-917-7680.

Improve job interview skills at Library workshop



Unemployment in Linn County reached 16 percent this summer, but a free workshop at the Albany Public Library could help you find a new job.

Marjorie Miller, M.A., a retired career counselor, will conduct the workshop on interviewing skills at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, September 22, 2009, at the Main Library, 2450 14th Avenue SE. Miller will address topics including what employers are looking for; how best to express what you have to offer when meeting with an employer; and how to discuss your strengths and weaknesses. Miller will also provide pointers for answering interview questions.

Libraries, including the Albany Public Library, are good places to learn about job opportunities, refine resumes, and apply for jobs. President Barack Obama, quoted in *American Libraries* magazine in 2005, credited the Mid-Manhattan Public Library for helping him find work as a community organizer in Chicago.

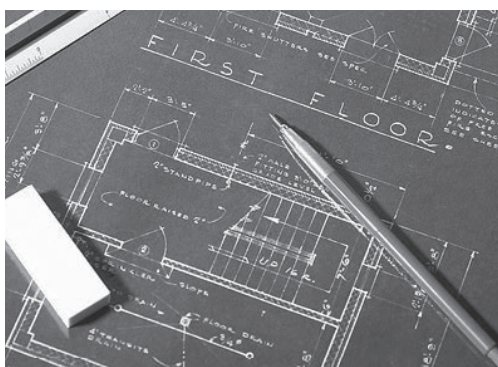
The Albany interviewing skills workshop is open to the public. For more information, call the Library at 541-917-7582.

We're Updating the Development Code – Have Your Say

Albany's Development Code needs to be refurbished. The Code regulates new development in the City with zoning and other development standards.

Every few years it's sensible to review the Code – over 250 pages worth – to make sure it still meets today's needs. Are we getting the great neighborhoods Albany's citizens want?

The Community Development Department is taking advantage of the slower pace of development to devote energy to this project. We will methodically go through all sections of the Code and deal with the backlog of suggested changes that have built up in recent years.



Then we'll have updated standards ready when the economy turns around and applications pick up again.

Everyone needs to have their say:

developers, citizens, businesses, utility companies, other government agencies, neighborhood groups. We've provided a form on the City's Web site so anyone can make suggestions or recommendations about possible changes to the Code: www.cityofalbany.net/comdev/devcode/.

The Planning Commission and City Council will review and consider staff and public recommendations twice a year, usually in the spring and the fall. The City Council just completed the first round of review.

For more information, contact Anne Catlin at 541-917-7560 or anne.catlin@cityofalbany.net.

New and Relocated Parks Nearly Complete

Work is nearly complete on Kinder Park, the newest park in the City of Albany inventory, as well as Eads Park, which was relocated when the City's Water Reclamation Facility expanded. Here's the latest:

Kinder Park

Albany's newest neighborhood park, Kinder Park, is nearing completion and should open for use in September 2009. Located on Oak Street south of Ninth Avenue, the 12-acre park will feature two youth baseball fields, a large playground, picnic shelters, and new pedestrian paths with links to the existing Periwinkle Path.

The \$730,000 construction project was funded with a grant from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, local Park System Development Charges, and



donations through the Albany Boys & Girls Club. In addition to cash donations, the park site was a gift to the City from the Albany Boys & Girls Club.

The City's contractors and employees of the Parks & Recreation Department were finishing work on the irrigation system, installing playground equipment and other

park furnishings and seeding the lawn throughout the month of August.

Eads Park

A new and improved Eads Park should also be completed in September. The park is now located at the intersection of Linn Avenue and Alco Street after being moved from its original location on Columbus Street to accommodate the recent expansion of Albany's Water Reclamation Facility.

The new Eads Park includes a small playground, trails, picnic tables, and a wheelchair-accessible parking area. The new park is more than twice the size of the original one and is immediately adjacent to City-owned open space along the Willamette River and the riverfront trail system.

Fire Department Treasure Hunt October 3, 2009

The Albany Fire Department's annual Treasure Hunt will be held on Saturday, October 3, 2009, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Each of Albany's four fire stations will be open to the public with different activities scheduled during these hours.

Mark your calendars now and watch for more Treasure Hunt news as the date gets closer.

City of Albany Directory

Mayor

Sharon Konopa 926-6812

Ward I Councilors

Dick Olsen 926-7348

Floyd Collins 928-2961

Ward II Councilors

Bill Coburn 928-0649

Ralph Reid, Jr. 928-7382

Ward III Councilors

Bessie Johnson 791-2494

Jeff Christman 926-0528

City Manager

Wes Hare 917-7505

City Hall Phone Numbers

General Information 917-7500

Ambulance Billing 917-7710

Building Inspection 917-7553

City Manager 917-7500

Downtown

Carnegie Library 917-7585

Economic Development 917-7639

Engineering 917-7676

Finance Office 917-7500

Fire Department 917-7700

Human Resources 917-7500

Main Library 917-7580

Mayor/Council Line 917-7503

Municipal Court 917-7740

Parks & Recreation 917-7777

Planning and Zoning 917-7550

Police Department 917-7680

Public Information Office 917-7507

Senior Center 917-7760

Transit 917-7667

Water and Sewer Billing 917-7547

Water/Sewer/Streets 917-7600

Emergencies
(Fire, Police, Ambulance)
Dial 911

City Bridges Info

City Bridges is published by an editorial team from the City of Albany. Questions and input about this newsletter can be directed to the City Manager's Office, 333 Broadalbin Street SW, P.O. Box 490, Albany, OR 97321-0144.

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Going Green: City Sets Goal to Model Sustainability

A group of City of Albany staff got together about a year ago to create a plan to make staff more conscious of how our daily jobs affect each other, Albany, Oregon, and the planet. The work of the volunteer Sustainability Task Force led the City Council to adopt Resolution 5708, committing the City to leading by example as a model of sustainability in practice. We've taken that resolution a step further by making it a goal in the 2010 version of the City Strategic Plan.

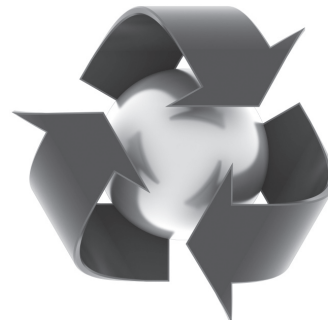
Sustainability is a way of thinking about how to solve issues related to concerns about the environment, changing economies, and rising energy costs. In addition to strategic planning, the task force is developing policy recommendations for how the City delivers core services, day-to-day decisions, and individual actions.

The task force started by taking a look at the efforts already being made by City staff to reduce use of resources, reuse them when possible, and recycle as much as we can. The group is looking at how to conserve energy in City operations and is conducting an audit of the waste that our operations produce. We are looking into increasing the use of renewable resources and improving recycling efforts.

The City began buying Blue Sky electricity from Pacific Power this spring, lending public support to the development of wind, solar, and other renewable sources of electricity. The City is buying 361 blocks of 100 kilowatts each month. Blue Sky energy costs more up front than traditional forms of electricity, but

the City expects to recoup the additional expenses through retrofitting the heating and air conditioning system at City Hall with state and federal energy conservation grants.

In February, the City began producing hydroelectric power for the first time since the early 1990s at the historic Vine Street Water Treatment Plant under license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and funded in part by grants from the Energy Trust of Oregon and Pacific Power. The hydropower is returned to the local power grid.



Here is a list of other efforts made by the City to reduce, reuse, and recycle. We are always looking at ways to improve and anticipate more sustainability practices to come.

- Reduce the use of paper by increasing electronic documents and information sharing
- Recycle paper, plastic, metals, oils, cardboard, and electronic equipment
- Increase use of recycled products
- Purchase of green cleaning products for City buildings
- Recycling facilities at public events

- Reuse wood chips for park paths and tree mulch
- Pretreatment program protects water quality and local watershed health
- Erosion and sediment control programs
- Water conservation and leak detection program
- Reuse of biosolids on local farms
- Energy conservation audits of City facilities
- Energy-efficient lighting installed at City facilities
- Water-efficient planting and irrigation controls in parks and rights-of-way
- Tree preservation measures and tree planting
- Bike and pedestrian path improvements along city streets
- Police and Public Works Departments use some hybrid vehicles
- Development Code that includes some Smart Growth principles such as village centers, cluster development, and design guidelines
- New wastewater treatment plant will reduce and prevent sewer overflows into the Willamette River
- Hazardous waste disposal and reporting program
- Integrated pest management in parks
- Annual river cleanups

If you have suggestions for ways the City of Albany and its employees can be more green, get in touch with the Sustainability Task Force through Craig Carnagey, 541-704-2303 or craig.carnagey@cityofalbany.net

Go Back to the Library September 30

Albany Public Library staff will host Back to Library Night on Wednesday, September 30, 2009, to get regular patrons and first-time visitors acquainted with the changing and growing services available there. The special event is scheduled from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Main Library, 2450 14th Avenue SE.

If you haven't visited the Library for awhile, you may not know that the Library offers access to databases not available through other channels such as standard Internet search engines and has computers

that can access those and other resources, such as:

- More than 13,000 magazine titles that are archived, searchable, available in full text and/or downloadable to an MP3 player;
- More downloadable audio books than actual audio books;
- Mango, a database where you can learn a new language;
- The ability to handpick articles in periodicals to be delivered to your e-mail inbox before they hit print news stands;

- Power Search, a database of periodicals;
- Access to on-line databases and other references around the clock at <http://library.cityofalbany.net/reference/db.php>;
- Global Road Warrior, a travel resource;
- Legal Forms, which has an emphasis on Oregon.

Visit these resources or plan a trip to the Library where staff will be glad to assist you. If you like what you see or want to find out more about one of these electronic resources, join staff for Back to Library Night. Everyone is welcome.

Stimulus Funds Put Youth to Work in Albany Parks & Recreation Programs

The Oregon Youth Conservation Corps Grant and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act put 37 Albany, Oregon, area youth to work in Albany parks and facilities this summer.

Five youth and a crew leader worked on the Oak Creek Trail in Southwest Albany in July and August through the OYCC and a \$32,000 grant from the Pacific Northwest Region of the US Forest Service for the Oregon Youth Employment Initiative. The OYCC crew was funded for eight 40-hour weeks of work on shovel-ready projects for conservation, stewardship, restoration of natural resources and conservation education for public benefit on public and private lands. The projects were required to address high priorities in local communities. Albany Parks & Recreation applied for the grant in partnership with the Community Services Consortium. Albany's trail conservation project



included regular trail maintenance, green space stewardship, invasive species removal, restoration of natural resources, ecosystem enhancement, forest health protection, and some fencing. Southwest Albany residents who live near the Oak Creek Trail praised the crew's work on a bridge there, done during the hottest week of the summer at the end of July.

Albany Parks & Recreation also partnered with Community Services Consortium to provide 130 hours of summer work opportunities and experiences, funded by federal economic stimulus funds, for each of 32 low-income or at-risk youth ages 16-24. Jobs included clerk, recreation aide, and maintenance/custodial aide, working on Laserfiche filing, customer services, assisting at summer camps, Fun in the Park events, River Rhythms and Mondays @ Monteith concerts, facility maintenance, landscaping, painting, Senior Center event setup and cleanup, vehicle cleaning, and working with Economic Development assisting partner agencies with promotional activities and other clerical work.

Each youth to satisfactorily complete employment earned \$1,200, along with learning valuable skills and experience to add to their resumes for future jobs.

Plans for Broadalbin Promenade Move Forward, Pilot Block Scheduled



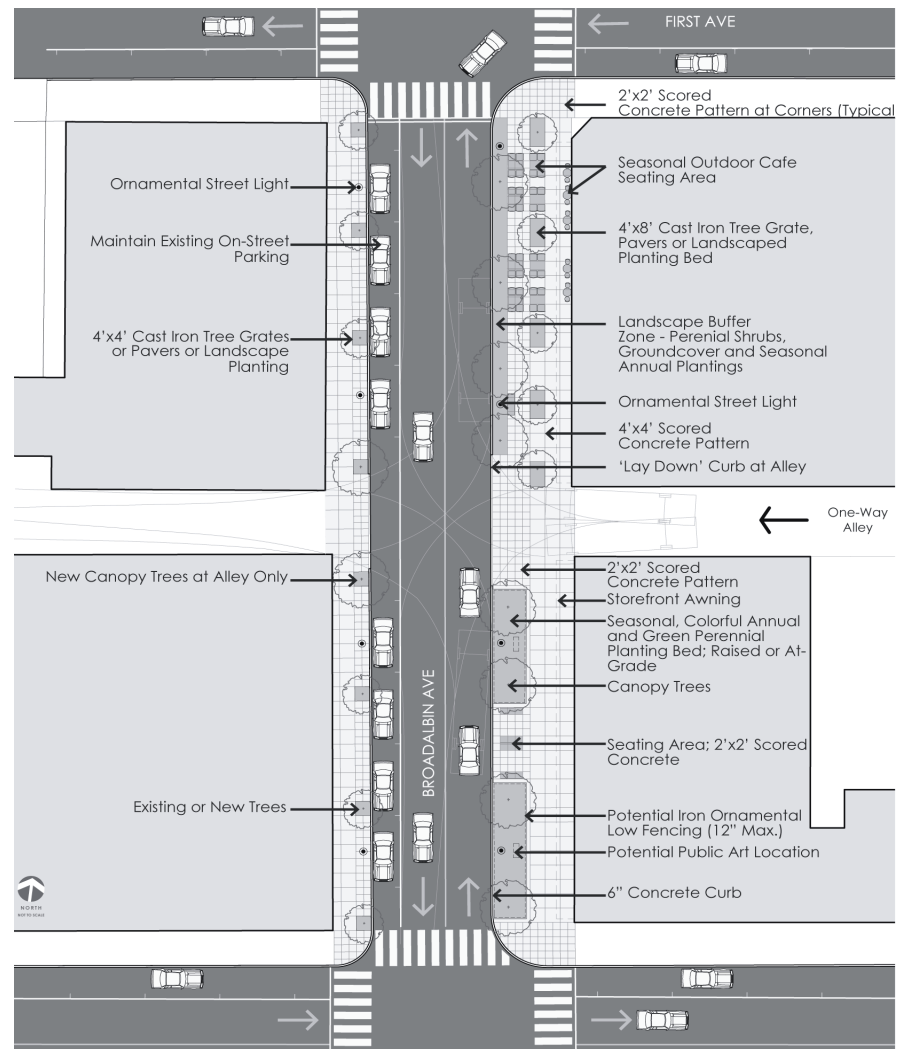
The Central Albany Revitalization Area (CARA) has directed City staff to finalize a plan for revamping Broadalbin Street between First and Second Avenues. This fall, CARA will complete final review of the pilot project, which is scheduled to be built next spring.

The main changes would be to widen the sidewalk on the east side of the street, adding 10 feet—taking the sidewalk to 22 feet in total width, adding trees and artwork, and eliminating most parking on that side. The street would remain open to two-way traffic.

The promenade project came off the shelf within the last year because plans for the renovated Cusick Bank Building at First

and Broadalbin called for sidewalk dining on Broadalbin Street.

The design was prepared by George Crandall of Crandall Arambula, a Portland architectural firm that put together Albany's Town Center Plan in 1995. That plan includes the "Broadalbin Promenade" with similar pedestrian features from the Linn County Courthouse to the Willamette River. The Town Center Plan is based on a public space called Albany Square on the riverfront at the end of Broadalbin in place of the parking lot that is there now and is designed to be the main north-south pedestrian connector between the riverfront, downtown, and the government center of Albany.



25 Years of Albany Numbers

For 25 years in a row – since 1984 – the City of Albany has received the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the international Government Finance Officers Association. The award is based on the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, or CAFR. Today's CAFR is 192 pages, compared to the 91-page document from 1984. Lots of other things have changed since 1984, too. Let's take a look...

- In 1984, the average per capita income in Albany was \$10,032. In 2008, the average was \$26,916, a 38% increase.
- The 1984 population of Albany was 27,736. In 2008, it was reported to be 47,470, up 71%.
- The unemployment rate was 13% in 1984, compared to 6.5% in June 2008. In May 2009, unemployment for Linn County was 16.3%.
- Gasoline cost \$1.40 per gallon in 1984. In 2008, gas was as low as \$1.69 and as high as \$4.20 in some areas.

- Student enrollment in the Greater Albany Public School district was 7,629 in 1984. By 2008, it was 9,100.
- The City had just purchased the water system from Pacific Power for \$9.8 million. Today, the City has a new treatment plant and maintains 246 miles of water lines.
- In 1984, Albany had 96 miles of paved streets and 25 miles of unpaved streets. Now, there are 150 miles of improved streets, 20 miles of unimproved streets, and seven miles of gravel streets.
- Albany had 121 miles of sewer lines in 1984, compared to 199 miles today.
- North Albany was not part of the city. It was annexed in 1991.
- The annual World's Championship Timber Carnival, put on by the Albany Jaycees, ran for four days around the Fourth of July.
- City Hall was located in the old Post Office building at Second Avenue and

- Broadalbin Street, purchased in 1965 for \$10,000. The new City Hall was constructed for \$4.8 million in 1994-1996 to house Parks & Recreation, Public Works Engineering, Fire Administration, Planning, Building Inspection, Finance, Municipal Court, City Manager's Office, Human Resources, Information Technology Services, and the City Council.
- The City had 250 permanent employees in 1984. By 2008, that number was 416, a 46% increase.
- The Police Department had 43 employees in 1984, compared to 72 in 2008.
- Albany had two fire stations and 51 Fire and ambulance employees in 1984; today we have four fire stations and 65 staff.
- Albany's tax rate per \$1,000 of assessed value was \$24.09 in 1984. In 2008, it was \$19.05.

- The total assessed value in 1984 was \$690 million compared to \$2.87 billion in 2008.
 - As a sign of favorable economic diversity, the top ten taxpayers in 1984 accounted for 15% of the assessed value, while the top ten in 2008 accounted for only 9.34% of the assessed value.
 - Oregon Metallurgical Corp. was the largest taxpayer in 1984 with 4.21% of the total assessed value in the City. In 2008, the Dayton Hudson Corporation (Target) was the largest taxpayer at 2.76% of the total assessed value, and Oregon Metallurgical, now ATI All-Vac, moved to second place at 1.43%.
- Looking back, just about the only thing that has stayed the same in the last 25 years is the CAFR award! The prestigious award is a joint effort by staff in the Finance Department: City Clerk Betty Langwell, Senior Accountant Mike Murzynsky, Assistant Finance Director John Stahl, and Finance Director Stewart Taylor.

Protecting Albany's Natural Resources

Oregon's land use planning program addresses 19 statewide planning goals. Periodically, the City is required to review and amend its Comprehensive Plan and Development Code so they are consistent with the statewide planning goals. The City's work program to address Statewide Planning Goal 5 required us to inventory wetlands, riparian corridors, and wildlife habitat inside the City's urban growth boundary (UGB); identify which resources have the highest value and function (those that can be considered "significant"); and adopt measures to protect the significant resources.

A consulting firm hired by the City recently updated our wetland and riparian corridor inventories and conducted a more comprehensive look at wildlife habitat. Using state guidelines, the consultants developed recommendations for determining which resources are significant as well as measures for protecting the significant resources

inside the City's UGB.

Now that the technical work is done, the City will need to review the consultant's recommendations, determine which Goal 5 resources are significant, and adopt measures to protect them. The consultant's recommendations can be viewed and discussed at an open house in Council Chambers at Albany City Hall from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Thursday, September 10, 2009. A community forum and round table discussion on the topic will be scheduled in October.

Multiple Government Responsibilities

The vast majority of significant Goal 5 resources overlap along the creeks, rivers, and lakes inside the City's UGB. Protection of these Goal 5 resources directly relates to other City responsibilities, such as floodplain management, stormwater quality/management, buildable land supply, drinking water supply, parks and recreation, economic vitality, health and safety, and livability.

Balancing Preferences & Priorities

Some community members will feel strongly that the City should protect our natural resources beyond the minimum requirements of Goal 5, while others will feel just as strongly that the City should do the minimum possible to comply with Goal 5. Ultimately, the City Council must decide how to balance competing points of view with multiple government responsibilities and public benefit.

Costs and Challenges

Many of the significant Goal 5 resources inside the UGB are currently zoned as Open Space, which limits potential development. The federal government and state of Oregon already regulate development activities in wetlands and waterways. Additional development restrictions and requirements may increase development costs, decrease the amount of buildable land inside the UGB, restrain redevelopment potential of developed properties, and reduce the development

area of individual properties.

Benefits/Opportunities

Beyond their own intrinsic value, high value/high functioning natural resources provide a variety of societal benefits. Examples include regulation of river flow and groundwater levels; purification of air and water; provision of drinking water; climate control; waste absorption and breakdown; thermal regulation; nutrient cycling; recreation, education, research and spiritual opportunities; and aesthetic amenities.

Protecting the City's significant natural resources demands thoughtful consideration of the associated benefits and costs, and opportunities and challenges, both to individuals and the community as a whole, now and in the future.

If you have questions regarding Goal 5 in Albany, contact Heather Hansen at heather.hansen@cityofalbany.net or 541-917-7564.

National Night Out 2009



The National Night Out celebration in Albany on August 4, 2009, produced the highest number ever of neighborhoods hosting events. Thirty neighborhoods organized activities including potlucks, barbeques, block parties, dessert socials, pet parades, and live music.

National Night Out is designed to strengthen neighborhood unity, support anticrime efforts, and enhance community-police relationships. Teams from the Police and Fire Departments visited each event and offered goodies to

children along with general crime prevention information. The positive outcomes experienced in neighborhoods that participate in National Night Out each year continue to grow and help make Albany one of the best places to call home.

National Night Out is held the first Tuesday of August each year; the Albany Police Department encourages your neighborhood's participation in 2010. For more information to begin planning for next year, call Lynn Hinrichs at 541-917-3208.

Sponsors Help Parks & Recreation through Recession



When money is tight, programs that build community spirit and pride can fall by the wayside as government, service organizations, nonprofit agencies, corporations, and businesses struggle to keep up with "the basics." For some, paying the rent and utilities and keeping folks employed are their only considerations.

In Albany, many local businesses have taken a bigger view and look at community events as one of the basics of a great quality of life. They know that when times are hard, these events are more important than ever. They have committed resources, not just money, to ensure that Albany is a great place to live.

The Albany Parks & Recreation Department relies on participant donations, which are key to our events' success, as well as contributions from individuals, local businesses, and corporations to be able to offer these events. The River Rhythms concert series, Mondays @Monteith concerts, Northwest Art & Air Festival,

the Grand Slam sporting event, S'mores 'n Snores, Fun in the Park, and Festival Latino would not happen without the generosity of local sponsors.

This summer, sponsors donated more than a quarter of a million dollars in money, products, and services to keep children playing in the park, roasting marshmallows over the fire, and music in the air in Albany. When sponsors haven't had cash to contribute, many have looked for other ways to partner by helping to defray expenses, providing products or services that the City would otherwise have had to pay for, or volunteering time and expertise. While cash contributions are lower this year, the overall level of sponsorship has increased.

The Albany Parks & Recreation Department believes we are at our best when we work hand in hand with community members, businesses, and organizations to provide the experiences our community wants and needs.

Quality sponsors make that possible!



Floodplain Management Activities Mean Flood Insurance Discounts for Residents

The City of Albany participates in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The goals of the program are to provide flood insurance to property owners, to encourage flood loss reduction activities in communities, and to save taxpayers' money. To be covered by a federally backed flood insurance policy, a property must be in a community that regulates new development in the floodplain to standards that meet the NFIP requirements.

Another FEMA program, the Community Rating System (CRS), is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Participation in the program leads to flood

insurance premium rate discounts that reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community actions meeting the three goals of the CRS:

1. Reduce flood losses;
2. Facilitate accurate insurance rating;
3. Promote the awareness of flood insurance

Due to the City's active participation in the CRS program, Albany residents currently receive a 15% discount on their flood insurance premiums, up from 10% in 2006. An interdepartmental team of City staff is working collectively toward increasing the discount to at least 20% by the end of 2010.

If you have questions about the NFIP or CRS programs, please contact Heather Hansen at heather.hansen@cityofalbany.net or 541-917-7564.